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84

LETTERS TO SURF CITY

Send your letters to: ECLIPSE COMICS, P. O. Box 199, Guerneville, California 95446

Dear Eclipse,

Recently I discovered your comics. The first issue I bought was no. 5 with "Rio." Yesterday I bought no. 6. I want to congratulate you on your magazine. The better quality paper and ink, not to mention stories, has given comic art a whole new level of consciousness. Being an artist myself, I appreciate the distribution of a better quality comic. With the ever-falling-to-the-bottom-of-the-barrel state of Saturday morning animation and Bakshi's recently released piece of junk, *Fire and Ice*, it's good to know the comics are obtaining an all new high in quality.

I really liked **Rio** in no. 5. Excellent story and artwork. I even recognized many of the movie stills Doug got his ideas from. But Doug should work harder when it comes to coloring. It brought down **Rio** quite a lot.

I also like the comic **The Masked Man** in both no. 5 and 6. Excellently written and illustrated.

I also enjoyed **The Californio** very much. The story, characters, artwork (in all aspects!) were tops. I can't wait to see more. Next to **The Californio** and **The Masked Man**, the **Nightingale** story wasn't very good.

I'd like to suggest separate issues just for **Rio**, **The Californio** and **The Masked Man**. All three are very good and deserve more space.

Best wishes to you all!

John C. Bourdage
3209 S. 162nd, no. 13
Seattle, WA 98188

Thanks for taking the time to write us, John. We're glad to have you along as a reader.

Judging from the various emblems on your stationery, boasting you as a member of various Western organizations such as the "Custer Battlefield Historical & Museum Assn.," it's apparent that strips like **Rio** *and* **The Californio** *are what you've been looking for. It's our intention in running series like these to bring back to comics readers who may have become disenfrancised when variety left the field. Much has been written about the dwindling overall comics audience, and while it's certainly true that television has replaced comics as the cheapest and most accessible mass medium, it's ou belief that there are many potential readers who are staying away from the field because they find nothing that interests them.* **Rio**, *for example, has garnered many letters from people who don't read other comics and were told by a friend that "there's a Western comic." Those letters are very gratifying to receive not just because our individual effort has met with success, but also because that means one more potential comics reader has become an* actual *reader. And the more people who come back, or are introduced to comics, the better off we all are.*

Dear Cat,

I just wanted to drop you a note to let you know how much I've enjoyed **Eclipse Monthly**. I find all the features to be entertaining, but I particularly enjoy **The Masked Man**.

As a long-time, hard-core *Spirit* fan and collector, I've wished many times for new Eisner *Spirit* yarns. And I still do. Even so, **The Masked Man** has proved to be a most acceptable substitute.

Thanks for all the fun.

Michael White
P. O. Box 751
Elk City, OK 73648

B. C. Boyer thanks you for the compliment, Michael, as do we. Thank you *for the letter.*

Dear Dean and cat,

I was pleased to see that in no. 5, **Rio** wasn't halved. I realize that the mix of features is an important part of the magazine, but I thought **Ragamuffins** had been weakened by the bisecting process, and I imagine that the same would have happened to **Rio** if this story of endurance in the sun had been halved.

Perhaps in other issues you can spotlight other **Eclipse Monthly** characters. It would be a nice change of pace every now and then to see an extra-long **Masked Man** or a full-length **Ragamuffins** getting two-thirds of the book for a month. If the quality of each issue is consistently high (as it has been), I think that it will balance out against the risk to readership that a loose format presents.

A word on "Westerns." I was not interested in them before I started reading **Rio**, and I'm still not. To be honest, I'm not interest in Super-Hero comics either, and I buy next to none. More than the West, **Rio** was about *people*, which I *am* interested in.

The interaction between the characters in **Rio** kept my interest high as the fate of the soldiers became more and more inevitable. Personalities were sketched quickly and strongly, allowing the story to develop at an even pace. I was glad that no easy reversals were used, such as Lt. Pierce turning on Elgin as the nut's policies drove the men closer and closer to death. Pierce had evidently learned long ago that it was useless arguing with the Colonel, and his attempts to gently shift Elgin away from a disasterous course were far more interesting than any contrived confrontation would have been. Elgin came close to sterotype, since the Custer-like go-getter has become a staple of the modern film Westerns I've seen. His simple, rock-hard character held the core of the plot in his hand, however, so my quibble with him is a minor point.

The consistent appeal of **Eclipse Monthly** in my eyes has been the human touch evident in **Rio, Ragamuffins, The Masked Man** and even the whimsical loonies in **Cap'n Quick**. This should rightfully be uppermost in your stories, no matter *what* genre. **Eclipse Monthly** could print Super-Hero stories like virtually everybody else, and I'd still enjoy them as long as they had the same detail to character that the current **EM** crop possesses and most current Super-Heros lack. Of course, I'd rather see genres little used in comics, like Unicycle Lumberjack and 51-year-Old Ex-Marine Haircut, but I'll settle for what you've done in various styles, and what situations you've yet to stick human reaction into.

Eric Yarber
8307 Laconia
St. Louis, MO 63123

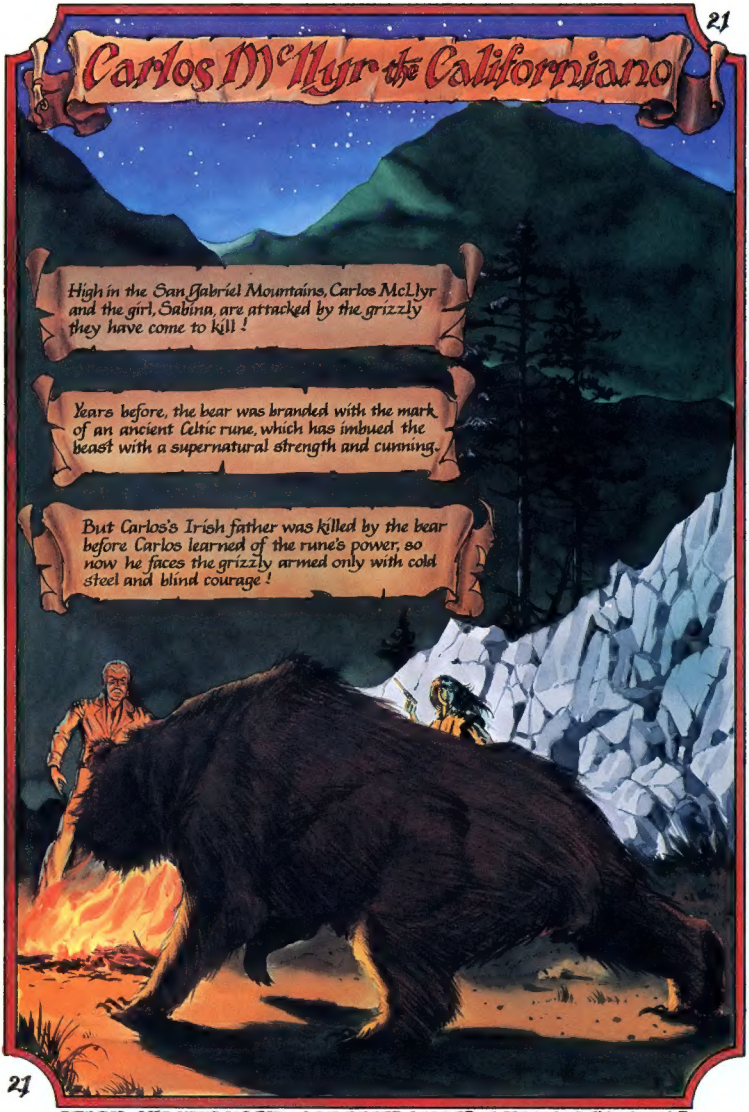
Your suggestion that we devote whole, or at least major portions of issues to single features is interesting, Eric. Let's say we throw the question to the rest of you.

Would you like to see a whole issue devoted to **The Masked Man***? How about* **Rio**, *or* **Ragamuffins**, *or* **The Californio** *? The only way we can tell what you want to see is for you to write us and let us know. This is a sincere request for your input. Please take us up on it.*

That's about it for this month, folks. Thanks for being here. - - *Dean Mullaney*

ECLIPSE MONTHLY (ISSN 0737-6189) Vol. 1, No. 8, May 1984. Published by Eclipse Enterprises, 81 Delaware Street, Staten Island, NY 10304. Catherine Yronwode and Dean Mullaney, Editors. The Masked Man TM and copyright 1984 B.C. Boyer. Carlos McLlyr TM and copyright 1984 Moonfire Productions. Mania Badge TM and copyright 1984 Don McGregor and Billy Graham. All other material copyright 1984 Eclipse Enterprises. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 in USA, $1.95 in Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person, or institution, is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in Canada.

Carlos McLyr the Californiano


High in the San Gabriel Mountains, Carlos McLlyr and the girl, Sabina, are attacked by the grizzly they have come to kill!
Years before, the bear was branded with the mark of an ancient Celtic rune, which has imbued the beast with a supernatural strength and cunning.
But Carlos's Irish father was killed by the bear before Carlos learned of the rune's power, so now he faces the grizzly armed only with cold steel and blind courage!

STORY, CHRISTY MARX • ART, PETER LEDGER • LETTERS, STAN SAKAI.

A SHOULDER SHOT WITH THIS PISTOL IS NOT ENOUGH TO DISABLE IT! MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO TRY FOR HIS BRAIN THROUGH THE MOUTH!
I MUST GET MY OTHER GUN!
MADRE! HE MOVES TO BLOCK ME!
IT IS AS THOUGH HE GUESSES MY THOUGHTS!
MOVE! KEEP THE FIRE BETWEEN US AND HIM!

YOUR PISTOL IS BROKEN?
YES! SOMETHING FELL OUT OF IT!
BUT IT IS LOADED?
YES!
GET BEHIND THE LOG!
BUT...!
WHAT WILL THAT DO?
IT MAY DO NOTHING! BE READY TO CLIMB UP A TREE!
HE IS TURNING AWAY FROM THE FIRE!
I WILL HAVE TO RISK ANOTHER SHOT!
WHOOMPH!
CARLOS FIRES! A SECOND LATER, THE OLD PISTOL IN THE FIRE EXPLODES!
THE BEAR TAKES THE FULL BRUNT OF FLYING CHUNKS OF HOT IRON AND LEAD!

STAY BACK, SABINA!
LET THE SMOKE CLEAR FIRST.
NEIGHHHHH!
ONE OF THE HORSES... SCREAMING!
IT WILL HELP IF I SHOW YOU HOW TO RELOAD.
I KNOW HOW, CARLOS! YOU GO AHEAD!
HE TORE OPEN MY GOOD HORSE AND LEFT THE NAG UNTOUCHED!
ADIOS, MY POOR FRIEND!
KAWOOOMPH!
YOU WILL PAY FOR THIS, TOO, YOU DEVIL!
THE PISTOL IS READY.
GOOD! KEEP IT HERE WITH YOU.
I WOULD HAVE NO CHANCE ALONE IF HE CAME BACK, EVEN WITH THE PISTOL!
AND YOU WILL NEED BOTH PISTOLS!
AND I CAN RELOAD FOR YOU!
SABINA...
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS ARGUE?
BECAUSE I AM ALWAYS RIGHT!
!

THEY FOLLOW A BLOODY TRAIL IN SILENCE.
CARLOS HOPES HE HAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED THE GRIZZLY.
HE IS WRONG!
IT WAS A GOOD SHOT. IT SHOULD HAVE SHATTERED THE BEAR'S SHOULDER!
BUT THE BEAR RISES, ROARS ITS HATRED, AND CHARGES AGAIN!
LOAD IT! USE IT IF HE CHARGES YOU!
AIM FOR HIS EYE! TRY TO BLIND HIM!

JESÚS PROTECT ME! THE BEAST WILL NOT DIE!
GYAHHH!
CARLOS!
...ONE...MORE ...SHOT...

FOR CARLOS, TIME SPLINTERS INTO BRIGHT FRAGMENTS: THE BEAR'S DEATH SCREAM, THE SOFT ROCK CRUMBLING, WAVES OF PAIN LASHING HIS SIDE, A SENSE OF TRIUMPH AND THEN...
HE FALLS!
BLESSED MARIA! LET HIM BE ALIVE!
IT IS NOT FAIR, TO BE SO BRAVE AND STILL DIE!
OH! HE IS MOVING!
UHHHH...
WHEN WE RETURN, SABINA, I MUST FIND A WAY TO REPAY YOU!
YOUR WOUNDS...
FIRST, WE MUST BE SURE THE DEVIL IS TRULY DEAD!
FATHER... IT IS DONE.

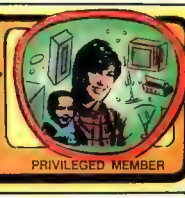
IT IS A HARD CLIMB TO CAMP. CARLOS PASSES OUT AND WAKES TO FIND HERBS PACKED INTO HIS CUTS AND THE FIRE BLAZING HEARTILY.
SABINA REVIVES HIM WITH POTENT COFFEE AND TELLS HIM, "THEY WILL BE HERE SOON."
"WHO?" HE ASKS.
YOUR FRIENDS! I SAW THEM IN THE VALLEY! I BUILT UP THE FIRE AND THEY HAVE SEEN THE SMOKE AND ARE HEADED THIS WAY!
BUT WHY DO YOU PACK NOW?
WE WILL WAIT HERE FOR THEM!
NO, NOT "WE" CARLOS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I SAID I WAS NOT GOING BACK! YOU ARE A RICH CABALLERO! YOU CAN EASILY BUY MORE GUNS! BUT I WILL NEED THEM TO STAY FREE! LIE STILL! OR YOU WILL LOSE MORE BLOOD!
BUT-- BUT--
THAT IS MY BEST SADDLE!
ADIOS, CARLOS!
SOMEDAY WE WILL HUNT TOGETHER AGAIN!
SLUT!
WHORE!
COME BACK! MY PISTOLS! MY RIFLE!

...HE SLUMPS BACK, EXHAUSTED...
...PASSES IN AND OUT OF DARKNESS...
...UNTIL A HEAVY SHUFFLING SOUND DRAGS HIM BACK...
...TO AWARENESS!

IT HAS RETURNED! IT IS DEAD, BUT IT MOVES! I AM LOST!
FATHER, I WILL BE WITH YOU SOON!
INSTINCTIVELY, HIS HAND REACHES TO CLUTCH HIS CRUCIFIX...
...AND FINDS INSTEAD, THE RUNE OF LLYR!
FATHER?
WITH FIRE IT WAS MADE, WITH FIRE YOU MUST STRIKE!
BURN AWAY THE BRAND! DESTROY THE MARK OF THE RUNE!
STRIKE IN THE NAME OF LLYR!
THERE IS NO TIME TO QUESTION WHAT GOD RULES HERE! CARLOS SEIZES A FLAMING BRANCH AND STRIKES!
AND AS THE BRAND ON THE BEAR'S FACE IS SEARED AWAY, THE MUTILATED HUSK COLLAPSES!
CARLOS SITS.
HE WAITS.
WAITS UNTIL NOTHING IS LEFT...
...BUT SMOKE AND ASHES!

DIRTY POOL

at "MANIA BADGE" SATISFY YOUR EVERY OBSESSION



PRIVILEGED MEMBER

WRITTEN BY DON McGREGOR

ARTWORK BY BILLY GRAHAM

THIS IS FOR JANE ARUNS, ONE OF THE BUTSIEST WOMEN IN NEW YORK CITY, WHO TOOK ME THROUGH THE WILD WEST, DIAMOND LIL'S, AND GOT ME TO THE HOSPITAL IN TIME.

AUDREY HENDRIX DOESN'T CARE THAT SHE IS ONE OF THE FEW BLACKS WORKING AT MANIA-BADGE.

MANIA-BADGE OFFERS HER FAMILY A WAY OUT FROM THE DESPERATION OF URBAN SLUMS.

IT WOULD APPEAR MANIA-BADGE IS GOING TO MAKE GOOD ON SOME OF THE PROMISES IN IT'S PUBLICITY PORTFOLIO.

BUT DON'T BANK ON IT.

TIK

TIK

I DON'T LIKE IT, PAULA.

NO, I DEFINITELY DO NOT LIKE IT.

INKING BY: GERALD FORTON * LETTERED BY: PETE IRO * COLORED BY: PHIL DEWALT

[From the publicity portfolio of MANIA BADGE] Contribute to the GNP: if you can't afford it . . . charge it! Keep America in debt and you'll keep America at work! Self-denial is the only major sin. MANIA BADGE: the charge card that lets you satisfy your every obsession.

MANIA BADGE: It'll get you into more places than a cop.

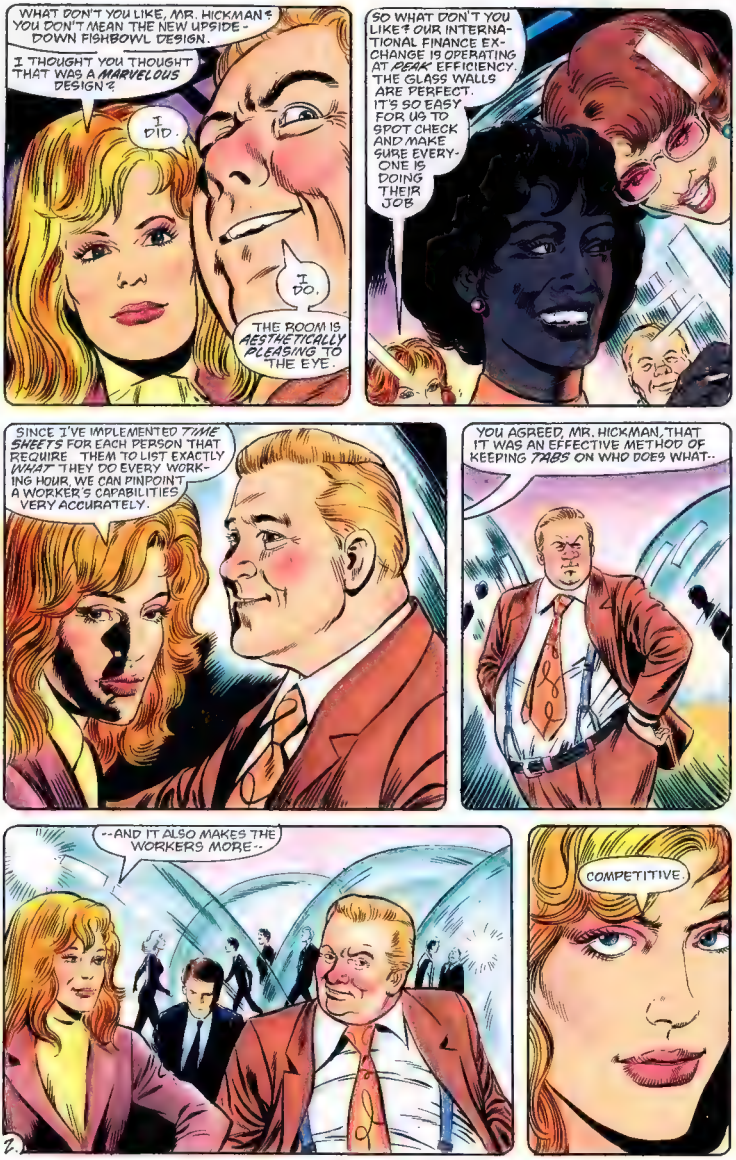
You are looking at MANIA BADGE — the ultimate *charge card*.

This card is flashed internationally at the best restaurants and massage parlors around the world. The dinner, massage and whatever extras will cost you a slight finance charge of 19.8% per year. The publicity portfolio does not mention that such an interest rate almost puts them in *competition* with your neighborhood loan shark.

This pliable door-jimmey is a symbol of respectability. Having this piece of plastic in your purse or wallet signifies that you are a *responsible* citizen. Holding this card in your hand tells others that you are a member in good standing of a *select fraternity*.

You need not be *alone* You belong to Mania Badge's global family.

As with any business operating on such a vast scale, Mania Badge spends a great deal of time, energy and money on *image*. The people who work at Mania Badge must present the correct appearance in action and dress. Some employees have commented (but not too loudly) that for a business that utilizes the newest computers and programming machines, the higher echelon of Mania Badge maintains almost *archaic principles* of business ethic.


WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE, MR. HICKMAN? YOU DON'T MEAN THE NEW UPSIDE-DOWN FISHBOWL DESIGN.
I THOUGHT YOU THOUGHT THAT WAS A MARVELOUS DESIGN?
I DID.
I DO.
THE ROOM IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING TO THE EYE.
SO WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE? OUR INTERNATIONAL FINANCE EXCHANGE IS OPERATING AT ABSOLUTE EFFICIENCY. THE GLASS WALLS ARE PERFECT. IT'S SO EASY FOR US TO SPOT CHECK AND MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS DOING THEIR JOB.
SINCE I'VE IMPLEMENTED TIME SHEETS FOR EACH PERSON THAT REQUIRE THEM TO LIST EXACTLY WHAT THEY DO EVERY WORKING HOUR, WE CAN PINPOINT A WORKER'S CAPABILITIES VERY ACCURATELY.
YOU AGREED, MR. HICKMAN, THAT IT WAS AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF KEEPING TABS ON WHO DOES WHAT.
--AND IT ALSO MAKES THE WORKERS MORE--
COMPETITIVE.

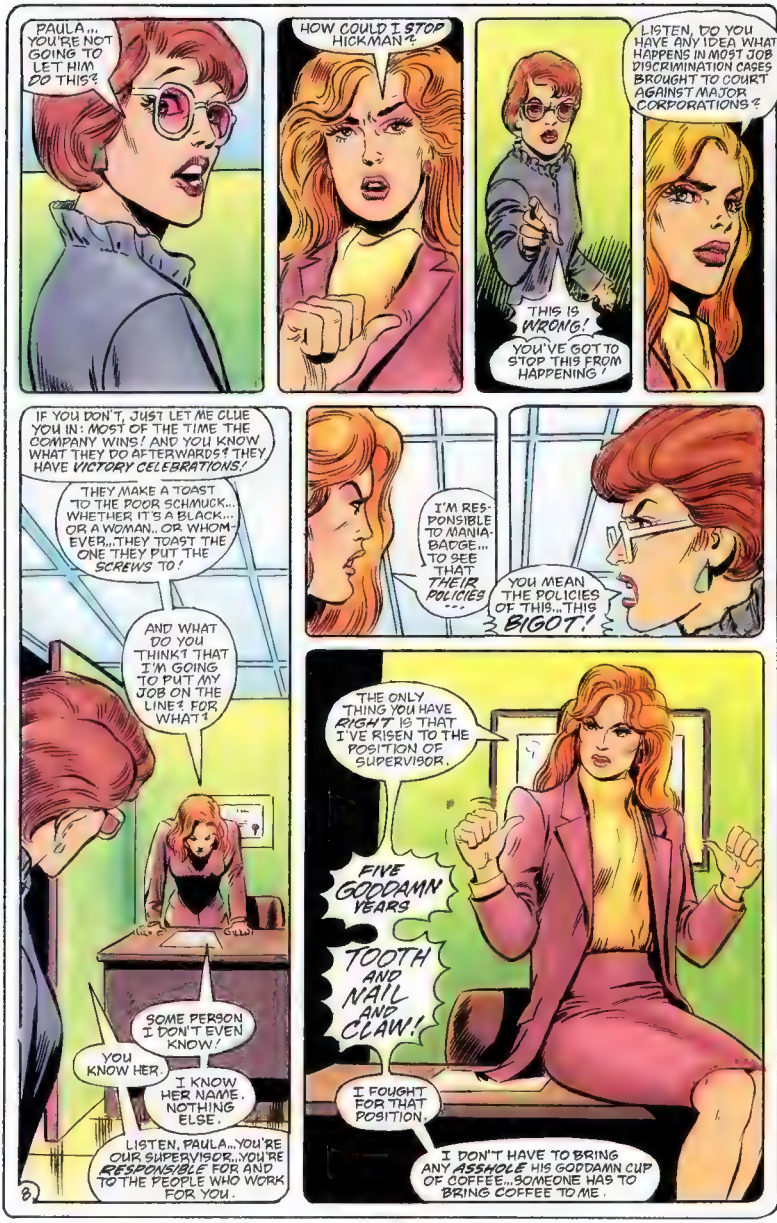
I'VE ALWAYS FOUND IT'S A STRONG INCENTIVE WHEN A WORKER'S A LITTLE BIT INSECURE ABOUT THEIR JOB.
THAT'S ALL WELL AND FINE, PAULA, BUT IT'S THIS AUDREY HENDRIX PERSON WHO BOTHERS ME.
AUDREY?
WELL, SHE'S NEW, SIR, BUT SHE'S BEEN DOING GOOD WORK SO FAR.
SHE SEEMS TO LEARN QUICKLY. INGRID HILLER'S BEEN TEACHING HER
NO GOOD. NO GOOD! THIS AUDREY HENDRIX PERSON SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN HIRED IN THE FIRST PLACE, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING, PAULA? WHERE YOU WENT WRONG IS IN LETTING ONE OF YOUR SUBORDINATES HANDLE THE THING.
THAT'S WHY WE'VE GOT THIS DARK COLOR IN HERE.
LISTEN, SAME THING HAPPENED IN CHARLIE BURKETT'S OFFICE, SOMEONE GOT HIM A PUERTO RICAN RECEPTIONIST. CAN YOU IMAGINE?
THIS WOMAN, HELL! SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN BLACK, SHE WAS SO DARK.
TIC
TIC
NOW I DON'T WANT YOU TO HANDLE THIS SLOPPILY, PAULA. I KNOW YOU CAN RESOLVE OUR LITTLE PROBLEM.
TIK-TIK
JUST... YOU KNOW... MAKE SURE HER DAYS ARE NUMBERED HERE. IT'S FOR HER OWN GOOD. SHE WOULD NEVER FIT IN WITH THE OVERALL IMAGE OF MANIA-BADGE, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
SO... FOR HER SAKE... AS WELL AS OURS... DO THE RIGHT THING. SHE HAS ONE SCREW-UP, I WANT YOU TO GET HER OUT OF HERE.
O-U-T-A
3

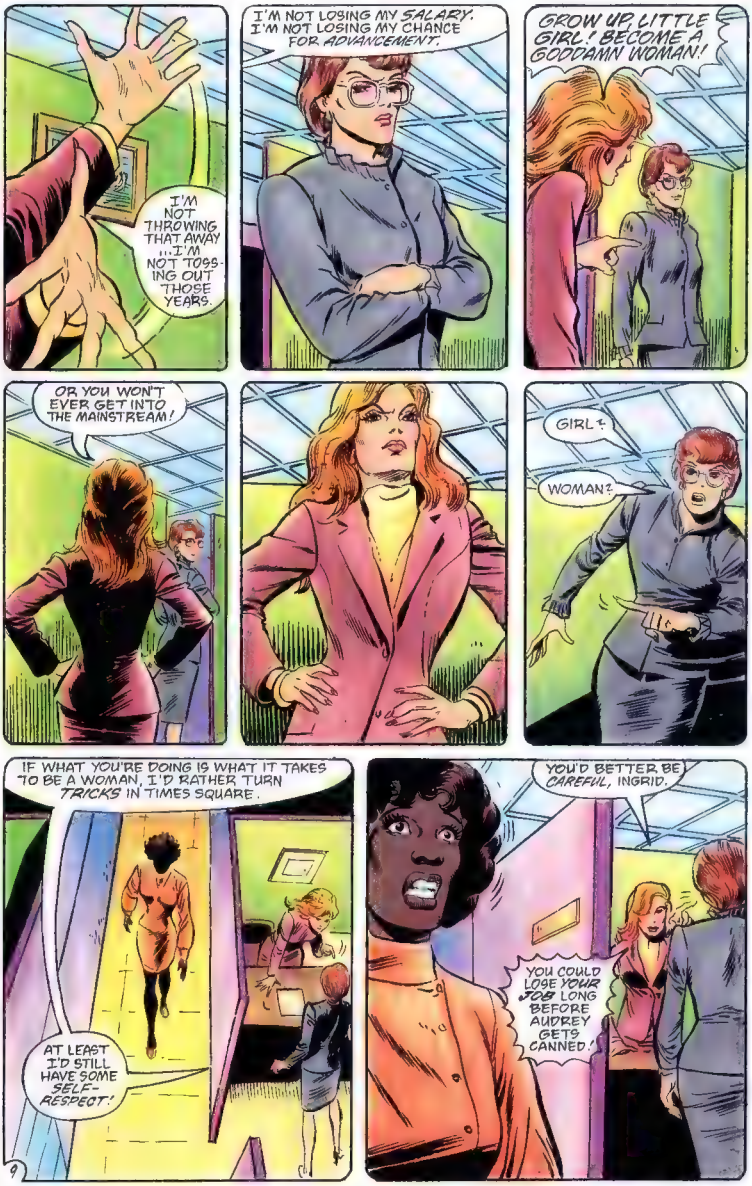
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'VE BEEN HERE THREE WEEKS ALREADY, INGRID.
TIME FLIES WHEN YOU'RE HAVING FUN.
IT DOES SEEM TO FLY WHEN YOU'RE WORKING HERE.
FLY? I SUPPOSE IT DOES WHEN IT ISN'T CRAWLING. DON'T YOU EVER GET EYE-STRAIN FROM THESE SCREENS? OR GET A LITTLE NERVOUS IF SOME DOCTORS AREN'T GOING TO COME OUT WITH A STATEMENT SAYING THAT THE GREEN LIGHT FROM THESE MACHINES--
TIK CLIK
--CAUSES CANCER IN LABORATORY RAT9?
I THINK ONE OF THESE DAYS THEY'RE GOING TO COME OUT AND SAY EVERYTHING CAUSES CANCER.
TIK TIK
THERE'S SOMETHING TO WHAT YOU SAY. SEEMS LIKE EVERY WEEK THERE'S SOMETHING NEW TO ADD TO THE LIST.
TIK CLIK
UH HUH. UH HUH. I DON'T GET SCARED OF NUTHIN' IN THIS PLACE-- THIS PLACE DON'T BOTHER ME NONE. I HEAR PEOPLE CARRYIN' ON ABOUT MANIA-BADGE, BUT I DON'T GET IT.
TIK
CLIK CLIK
LET THEM WORK SOME OF THE PLACES I HAVE, THEY'LL THINK THIS PLACE IS THE RITZ.
I SUPPOSE
4.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT SCARES ME, INGRID... THE SECTION OF BROOKLYN I LIVE IN.
THAT... SCARES ME.
HOW COME?
YOU SEE TOO MANY UGLY THINGS, THAT'S WHY.
TIK TIK TIK
MY KIDS... THEY SEE STUFF THEY SHOULDN'T OUGHTA HAVE TO SEE...
...DIRTY, MEAN-SPIRITED THINGS THEY SHOULDN'T OUGHTTA HAVE TO GROW UP KNOWIN'!
MY BOY'S ONLY EIGHT... MY GIRL'S SIX... MORE'N ANYTHING I'D LIKE TO GET THEM OUT'VE THERE.
OTHER DAY I WAS WALKIN' HOME FROM THE SUBWAY... SAW A CROWD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SIDEWALK.
CLIK-A-THE-A-CLIK
"THERE WAS BLOOD DRYING ON THE CEMENT
"I'D MISSED A KNIFIN' BY ABOUT FIVE MINUTES, IF THAT.
5.

THE VICTIM...DIED.
DEAD.
DEAD, AND THIS WOMAN, SHE'D LIVED ONLY THREE FLOORS DOWN FROM ME
THAT'S WHAT SCARES ME SOMETIMES.
TIK-A-CLIK-A-TIK-TIKA
KIK-A-TIK
I WANT TO GET OUT OF THERE SO BAD... JUST MOVE AWAY.
GOT TO BE ABLE TO SAVE MONEY TO DO THAT
WAY I'VE GOT IT FIGURED, THIS JOB OUGHT TO GIVE US THE CHANCE TO SAVE.
'COURSE, MY HUSBAND, LARRY, HE SAYS THE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE WHITE, AND WE'LL GET ALL KINDS OF GRIEF IF WE MOVE IN.
IT'S DANGEROUS IN A LOT OF WHITE SECTIONS, TOO... BUT YOU KNOW, THE BUILDING I LIVE IN IS INTERRACIAL. MAYBE YOU COULD TRY THERE.
YOU MIGHT RUN INTO SOME CLOSET BIGOTS WHO WOULD BE THE FIRST ONES TO SCREAM LIKE HELL AND DENY THAT'S WHAT THEY ARE.
INGRID?
YES?
YOU'RE OKAY...YOU KNOW THAT?
WELL... UH NOT REALLY
I COULD BE A LOT BETTER
INGRID?
YES?
I LIKE YOU.
6

I LIKE YOU, TOO, AUDREY.
CAN I SEE YOU A MOMENT, INGRID?
OF COURSE
ANY-THING WRONG?
WRONG?
OH, NO, NOTH-ING.
I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU HOW AUDREY IS WORK-ING OUT.
SHE'S A BIG HELP. I THINK THE DEPARTMENT IS GOING TO RUN SMOOTHER THAN EVER.
INGRID... I WOULDN'T GET TOO... CHUMMY... WITH AUDREY.
EXCUSE ME?
MR. HICKMAN DOESN'T LIKE HER.
WHY NOT?
WELL... I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT, ACTUALLY.. WOULD YOU BELIEVE HE SAID WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HER BECAUSE SHE'S...
WELL...
...BLACK?
HE SAID THAT?
IN SO MANY WORDS


PAULA... YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LET HIM DO THIS?
HOW COULD I STOP HICKMAN?
LISTEN, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENS IN MOST JOB DISCRIMINATION CASES BROUGHT TO COURT AGAINST MAJOR CORPORATIONS?
THIS IS WRONG!
YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THIS FROM HAPPENING!
IF YOU DON'T, JUST LET ME CLUE YOU IN: MOST OF THE TIME THE COMPANY WINS! AND YOU KNOW WHAT THEY DO AFTERWARDS? THEY HAVE VICTORY CELEBRATIONS!
THEY MAKE A TOAST TO THE POOR SCHMUCK... WHETHER IT'S A BLACK... OR A WOMAN.. OR WHOMEVER... THEY TOAST THE ONE THEY PUT THE SCREWS TO!
AND WHAT DO YOU THINK? THAT I'M GOING TO PUT MY JOB ON THE LINE? FOR WHAT?
SOME PERSON I DON'T EVEN KNOW!
YOU KNOW HER.
I KNOW HER NAME. NOTHING ELSE.
LISTEN, PAULA... YOU'RE OUR SUPERVISOR... YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND TO THE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR YOU.
I'M RESPONSIBLE TO MANIABADGE... TO SEE THAT THEIR POLICIES ...
YOU MEAN THE POLICIES OF THIS... THIS BIGOT!
THE ONLY THING YOU HAVE RIGHT IS THAT I'VE RISEN TO THE POSITION OF SUPERVISOR.
FIVE GODDAMN YEARS
TOOTH AND NAIL AND CLAW!
I FOUGHT FOR THAT POSITION.
I DON'T HAVE TO BRING ANY ASSHOLE HIS GODDAMN CUP OF COFFEE... SOMEONE HAS TO BRING COFFEE TO ME.


I'M NOT THROWING THAT AWAY ...I'M NOT TOSSING OUT THOSE YEARS.
I'M NOT LOSING MY SALARY. I'M NOT LOSING MY CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT.
GROW UP, LITTLE GIRL! BECOME A GODDAMN WOMAN!
OR YOU WON'T EVER GET INTO THE MAINSTREAM!
GIRL?
WOMAN?
IF WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A WOMAN, I'D RATHER TURN TRICKS IN TIMES SQUARE.
AT LEAST I'D STILL HAVE SOME SELF-RESPECT!
YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL, INGRID.
YOU COULD LOSE YOUR JOB LONG BEFORE AUDREY GETS CANNED!
9

AUDREY!
TAP TAP
WHACK
KER RAK
ACK
OH, INGRID
I KNOW, AUDREY.
I KNOW
THE END

THE FIRST SUNBURN OF THE SEASON: Spring time is with us again; i can tell by the nifty airbrush effects on my skin. I look like something marked up for mechanical colour separations thusly: "Y2R2 fleshtone bathing suit image on Y2R3 hot pink skin/(A) airbrush lace trim on suit, backs of legs, shoulders, nose, etc." Ah, the first sunburn of the season! It stings for a little while, but it betokens so much pleasure yet to come. . .

One of the nicest of the pleasures heralded by spring's first sunburn is the annual Eclipse Summer Outing. Dean and i will be going to three comic book conventions this summer. For the employees of other comics houses, congoing usually means a hasty flight from one airport to another, a cab ride to some faceless hotel room, a few hours meeting and greeting anonymous fans, a cab ride back to the airport, a flight to the point of origin, and back to the office next morning.

We don't do things like that at Eclipse. For one thing, we are our own bosses, so we can give ourselves a break now and then. For another thing, we happen to enjoy the almost-lost American hobby of motoring. (For those who don't remember it, "motoring" means travelling by scenic routes from here to there and back again, stopping along the way to eat in small cafes, admire the view, take photographs of unusual examples of architecture, buy fresh fruit at roadside stands, and read all those little bronze historical markers describing famous battles and the birthplaces of presidents.)

But, you might be wondering, how do all the comic books get published if the editors and publishers are motoring hither and yon from one convention to another?

I'm glad you asked that. It gives me a chance to provide an unsolicited testimonial for our partners-in-motoring, the wonderful people who run the Federal Express courier service. You see, with Federal Express overnight delivery, we can telephone Mark Evanier in Los Angeles, tell him to send the next issue of **Crossfire** to the Federal Express Office in, say, New Orleans, pick up the book, proofread it in our hotel room, make whatever corrections are needed, drop it off at Federal for overnight delivery to the colour separators, and be on our way, motoring into the sunset with nary a wasted moment.

In fact, between telephone company calling cards, modem hook-ups for word processors to typesetting houses, Federal Express overnight service, and the like, it **should** be possible to edit and publish comics, books, and magazines while motoring cross country perpetually in nothing larger than an Airstream trailer. Hmmm. . . maybe next year. . .

Seriously though, Dean and i will be going to three comic cons this summer, and if you want to show us your portfolio, get advance info on upcoming Eclipse projects, or just come over and say hello, here's where to look for us:

San Diego Trade Expo/Comicon: June 26 - 27 is the Trade Expo for comics publishers; the regular Comicon runs from June 28 - July 1. In addition to the two of us, other Eclipse people present will be *Marshall Rogers (***Cap'n Quick and a Foozle, Scorpio Rose, Coyote***), B.C. Boyer (***The Masked Man***), Mark Evanier, Will Meugniot, Dan Spiegle, Al Gordon, Rick Hoberg* and others from the **DNAgents, Crossfire** and **Surge** crews. You'll also be able to meet many of the fine artists and writers whose work appears in **Star*Reach Classics**. San Diego is the Big One, so if you can make it, you'll be up to your eyeballs in comic book, newspaper strip, and underground writers and artists!

Dallas Fantasy Fair: July 6 - 8. This is a new one for us, and we're going there in hopes of meeting folks as yet unmet, looking over the portfolios of aspiring new artists, and checking out Dallas' contributions to the fine art of barbequeing.

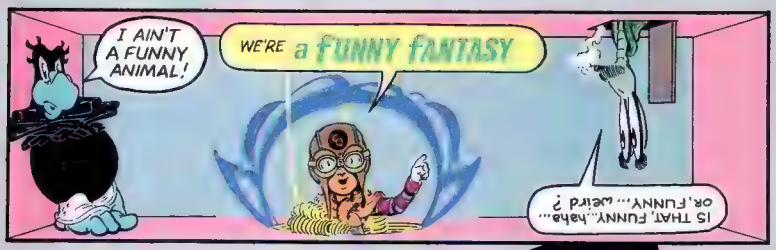
Atlanta Fantasy Fair: August 3 - 4. Having always enjoyed the work produced by Atlanta's semi-pro and fan publishers, we decided to attend the Atlanta con and see for ourselves what is going on in the area. Portfolio perusal and panel discussions will once again be the order of the day

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FUNNYBOOK FARM: Time for a few words of unabashed editorial enthusiasm: Doug Wildey's magnificently drawn **Rio** series returns in **Eclipse Monthly** no. 9 and 10, with a gorgeous cover painting of Rio guaranteeing that issue no. 10 will jump right off the racks and into your arms! . . . Summer signals the coming of the **DNAgents Dynasty** as the stories in **DNAgents, Crossfire** and the **Surge Miniseries** weave in and out of each other under the direction of Mastermind Mark Evanier. . . In **Aztec Ace** no. 3 and 4, Bridget (and the readers!) begin to learn more about the quixotic Avenger of Time's Suffering, while Ace himself must travel to ancient Egypt in search of "Mummy Dust" and "Necropolis Nights" . . . **Zot!** is off to a hot start, and things get hotter - fast – as writer-artist Scott McCloud introduces the next Great Villain of our times – DEKKO! This guy is so bizarre he makes even the book's editors' short hairs tingle. Straight from the heart of the Collective Unconscious!. . . All you Marshall Rogers devotees can hang in there – 'cause **Cap'n Quick & a Foozle** is definitely wending its way toward you. More details next month on this and **Scorpio Rose**, which Marshall is producing with the help of Michael Hernandez. These two guys are working overtime to bring you the best art money can buy, so be patient and (dare i say it?) keep the faith! . . . Finally, Howard Chaykin fans should be on the look-out for **Star*Reach Classics** no. 5 because that's the one with Chaykin and Len Wein's **Gideon Faust** cover-featured and starring in his own full-colour adventure. It's a treat you will not want to miss!

Would you believe i've run out of hype for this month? You wouldn't? You mean you want me to remind you to put in your order for those fabulous Eclipse character tee-shirts you see advertised all over the place? You say you can't wait for me to explain the neat shipping schedule which will ensure that you can obtain a new **DNAgents Dynasty** title three out of every four weeks in the month? You hint that this edition of **Surf City** is incomplete without a glowing paean of praise for new **Sabre** artist Jose Ortiz? You ask for for updates on the exploits of **Ms. Tree** and **Destroyer Duck**?

Sorry. No can do. I'm out of space! Maybe next time, okay?

cat



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FROM THE WRITINGS OF BARNEY McALLISTER:

The MASKED MAN

PHANTOM MAN

NAME'S BARNEY McALLISTER. I'M A REPORTER. I COVER REMARKABLE PHENOMENA.

MY FRIEND'S NAME IS DICK CARSTAIRS. HE'S A DETECTIVE. HE'S ALSO THE MASKED MAN. HE FIGHTS CRIME.

HOWEVER, HE'S NOT HERE RIGHT NOW. HE'S OUT PATROLLING THE STREETS WITH DAN DREKSTON.

DREKSTON IS A JERK. HE'S TAKEN OVER MY PLACE AS THE MASKED MAN'S FAITHFUL COMPANION.

AND NOW I'M LEFT HERE ALONE.

McALLISTER!!

WELL... MAYBE NOT COMPLETELY.

GET IN HERE ON THE DOUBLE!!!

SPECIAL THANKS TO PETER SANDERSON

MY BOSS'S NAME IS J. JUDAH JOHNSON OF THE *DAILY HORN*. HE HATES SUPERHEROES.

McALLISTER! WHAT'S ALL THIS CRAP ABOUT THE MASKED MAN STOPPING A BANK ROBBERY!!

IT'S TRUE, SIR. ALL THAT CRAP IS TRUE

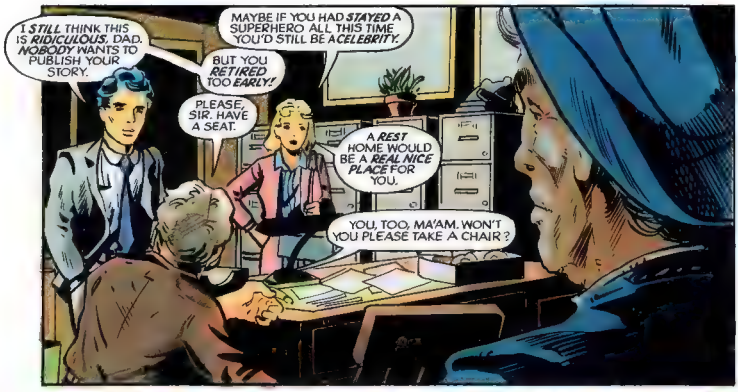
I DON'T CARE. I WON'T HAVE MY PAPER PROMOTING CRAZY SUPERHEROES! WHY DON'T YOU DO AN EXPOSÉ ON THE ARCHITECTURAL TERRORISTS INSTEAD?!

BUT SIR...

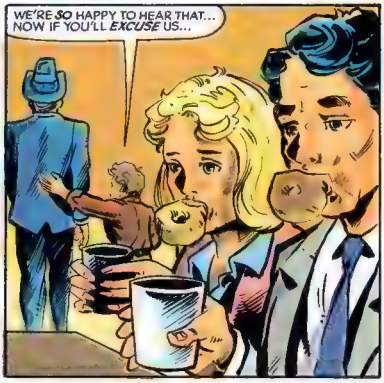
COLORED BY DENIS McFARLING · LETTERED BY L. LOIS BUHALIS · EDITED BY CAT @ YRONWODE

NEVER MIND!! I'VE GOT JUST THE JOB FOR YOU...
SEE THAT OLD GEEZER OVER THERE WAVING HIS ARMS?!
YES.
HE'S THAT DUMB CRIME FIGHTER FROM THE 1940S. NAME'S LENNY WINCHESTER. RING A BELL?
KEEP TALKING.
STANDING WITH HIM ARE HIS KIDS. THEY WANT TO PUT HIM IN A REST HOME. BUT IT'S OBVIOUS HE DOESN'T NEED IT. WHAT THEY REALLY WANT IS TO GET HIM OUT OF THEIR HOUSE. HE TAKES UP TOO MUCH OF THEIR TIME. HE SAID IF HE GETS HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY PUBLISHED, IT'LL MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO SUPPORT THEM ALL. THEY LOVINGLY OBLIGED.
SO WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
IT SEEMS NOBODY WANTS TO PUBLISH A STORY ABOUT AN OLD HAS-BEEN SUPERHERO. HE FIGURES IF WE DO A FEATURE ON HIM, SOMEONE WILL TAKE NOTICE.
YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE OF GUY WHO WOULD GO ALONG WITH THAT...
I KNOW. HA! HA!
I PLAN TO TURN THE TABLES ON HIM. SHOW THE WORLD WHAT RUNNING AROUND IN PINK TIGHTS CAN DO TO A MAN. AND I WANT YOU TO INTERVIEW HIM.
ME?
YES. CALL IT "THE END OF PHANTOM MAN."
PHANTOM MAN!?!
SUDDENLY I KNEW WHO THE GREAT MAN STANDING BEFORE US REALLY WAS. JOHNSON CONTINUED TO TALK, BUT I COULD NO LONGER HEAR HIM. I WAS LOST IN DREAMS GONE BY...
PHANTOM MAN! MASKED CRUSADER FROM THE STREETS OF MIDDLE CITY.
PHANTOM MAN! GUARDIAN ANGEL TO THE LIKES OF FESTUS DOYLE, DOYLE'S DAUGHTER, HELEN, AND HIS FAITHFUL COMPANION, BLACKIE.
SO VIVIDLY HAD HIS EXPLOITS BEEN RECORDED THAT THEY CAME BACK TO ME LIKE AGE OLD FRIENDS.
2

...THE TIME THE WHOLE FOURTH WARD WAS EVACUATED WHILE HE HAD A FACE-TO-FACE SHOWDOWN WITH THE CEPHALAPOD...
...THE TIME HE CONFRONTED SWYN'LL AND Mr. MAGGOTY AT THE CRIME CONVENTION IN ANDALE...
McALLISTER!!
Huh... Oh... Uh... I WAS JUST... Uh... WHAT?
I SAID, THIS IS LENNY WINCHESTER. SAY HI TO THIS WONDERFUL GENTLEMAN.
Uh.
HELLO, Mr. McALLISTER.
I'VE READ ALL YOUR ARTICLES ON THE MASKED MAN.
IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO MEET YOU.
REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU...mumble ..mumble...
Uh...YES, SIR... Uh...EXPLOIT AND Uh... DEGRADE.
PARDON?
Oh, HA! HA! HE SAID EXPLORE AND Uh... DEVELOP THIS FASCINATING STORY. HA! HA!
I'LL GET YOU LATER, McALLISTER!!

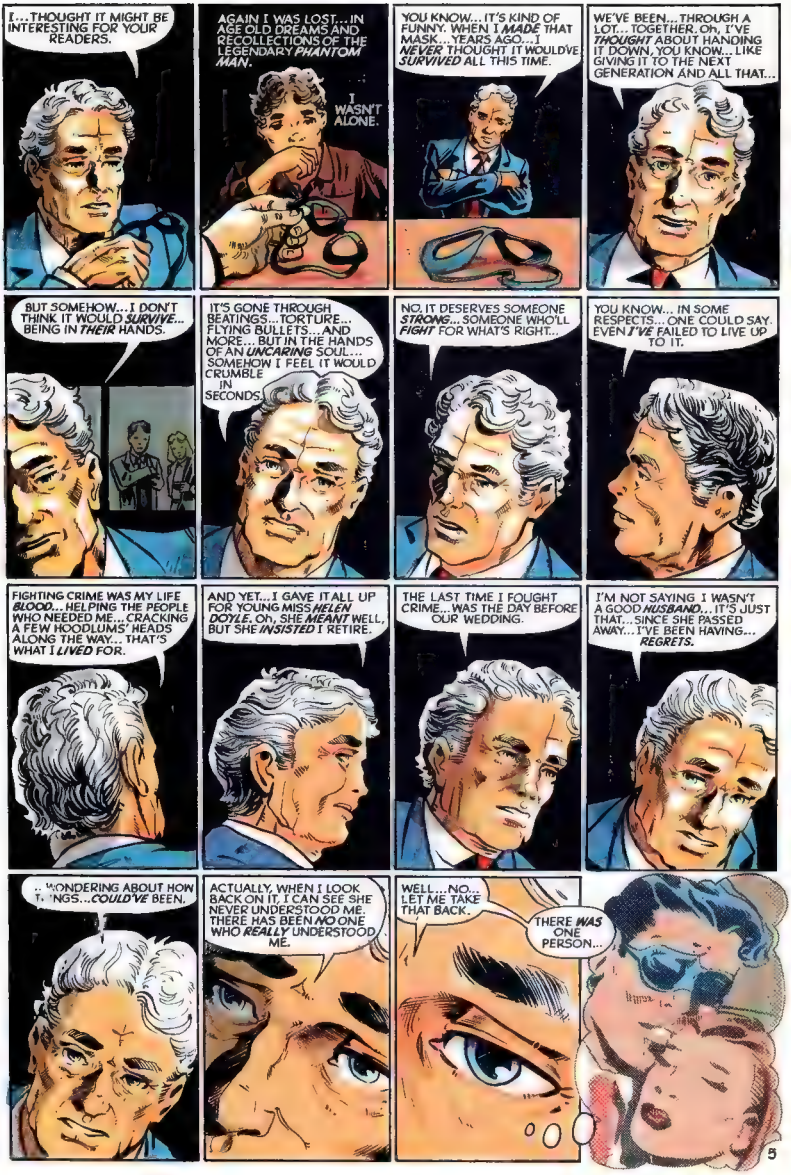

I STILL THINK THIS IS RIDICULOUS, DAD. NOBODY WANTS TO PUBLISH YOUR STORY.
MAYBE IF YOU HAD STAYED A SUPERHERO ALL THIS TIME YOU'D STILL BE A CELEBRITY.
BUT YOU RETIRED TOO EARLY!
PLEASE, SIR. HAVE A SEAT.
A REST HOME WOULD BE A REAL NICE PLACE FOR YOU.
YOU, TOO, MA'AM. WON'T YOU PLEASE TAKE A CHAIR?

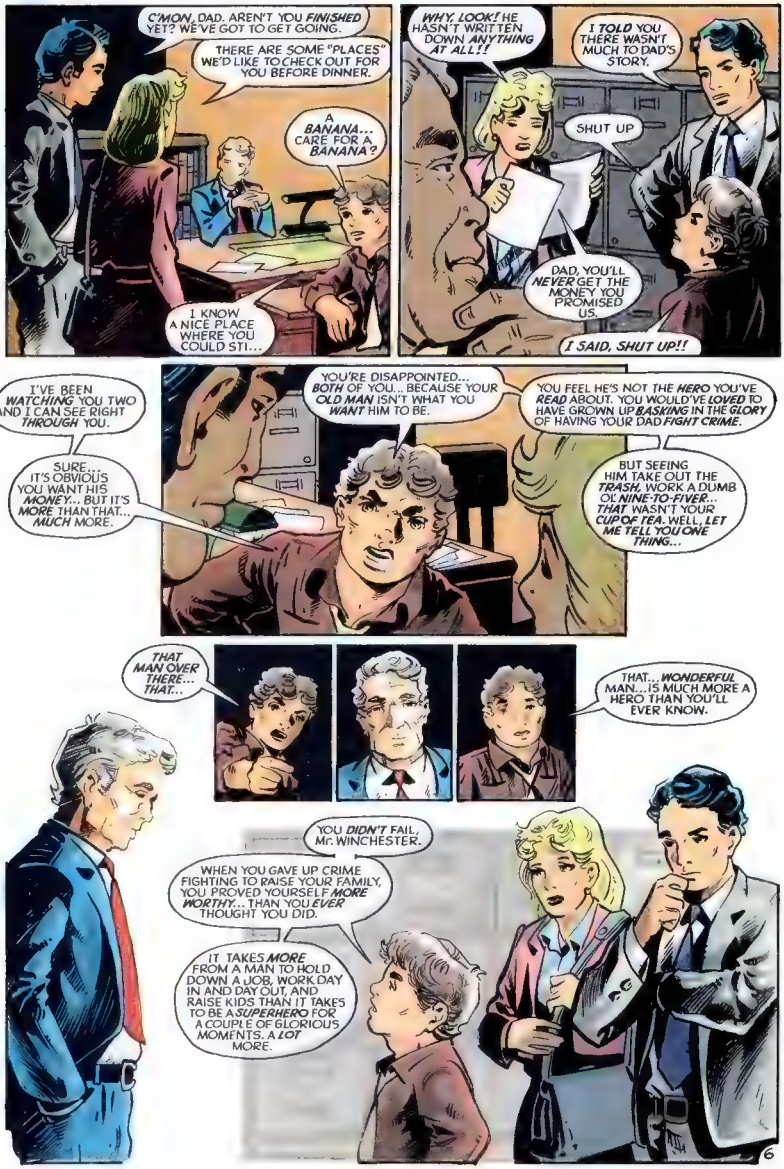
IT'S NOT THAT YOUR BIOGRAPHY WOULDN'T BE WONDERFUL...
...IT'S JUST THAT IT'S SO OLD FASHIONED.
CARE FOR SOME COFFEE...? DONUTS..?
YES, PLEASE.
BELIEVE US, DAD. IF YOUR STORY DOES MAKE MONEY, WE'D BE GLAD TO LET YOU STAY.

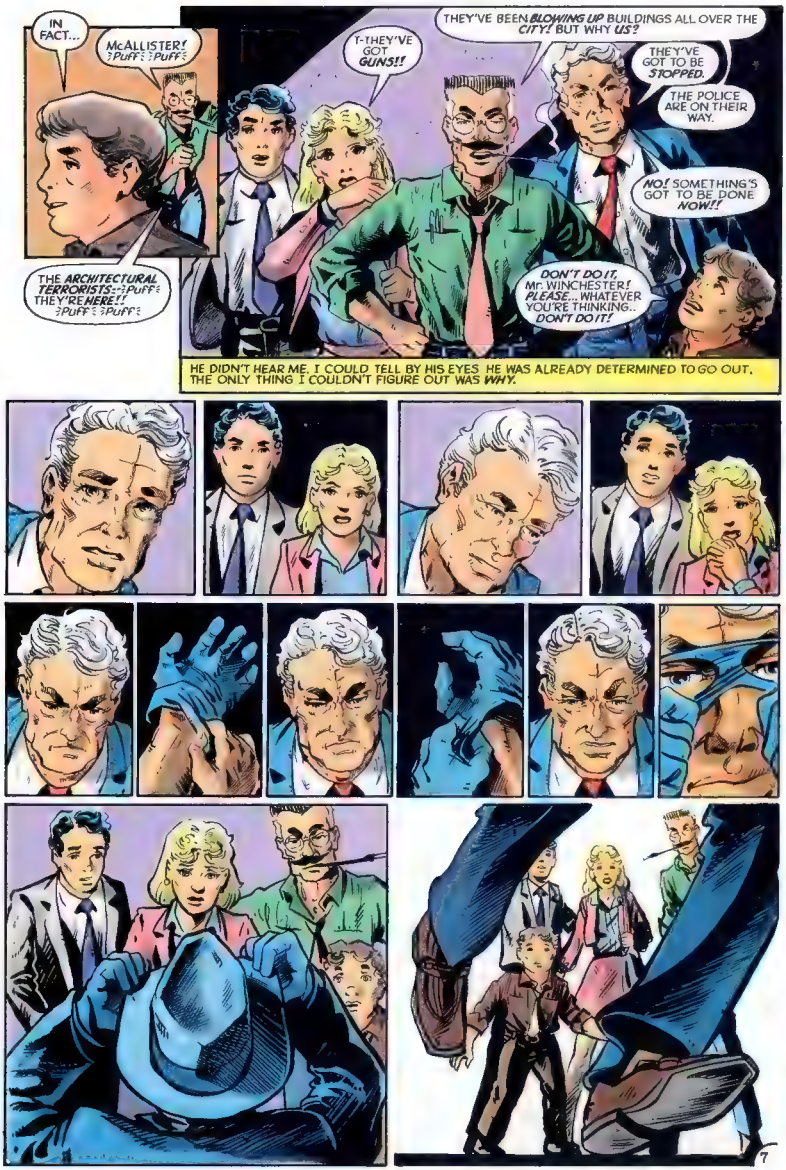


DICK CARSTAIRS, ALIAS *THE MASKED MAN*, IS GROWING IN STATURE AS HIS EXPLOITS BECOME MORE WELL KNOWN... BUT HE'S JUST A *NOVICE* COMPARED TO THE LEGEND WHICH SAT BEFORE ME.

AFTER THE FIGHT WITH BAWLING BILLY, THERE WAS A BRIEF... mmm... HIATUS... WITH TAFFETA TWILL IN BENGAL...
Oh, WAIT A MINUTE...
BEFORE I FORGET...
I BROUGHT ALONG SOMETHING... FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER.


I...THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING FOR YOUR READERS.
AGAIN I WAS LOST...IN AGE OLD DREAMS AND RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LEGENDARY PHANTOM MAN.
I WASN'T ALONE.
YOU KNOW... IT'S KIND OF FUNNY. WHEN I MADE THAT MASK...YEARS AGO...I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD'VE SURVIVED ALL THIS TIME.
WE'VE BEEN... THROUGH A LOT... TOGETHER. Oh, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT HANDING IT DOWN, YOU KNOW... LIKE GIVING IT TO THE NEXT GENERATION AND ALL THAT...
BUT SOMEHOW... I DON'T THINK IT WOULD SURVIVE... BEING IN THEIR HANDS.
IT'S GONE THROUGH BEATINGS... TORTURE... FLYING BULLETS... AND MORE... BUT IN THE HANDS OF AN UNCARING SOUL... SOMEHOW I FEEL IT WOULD CRUMBLE IN SECONDS.
NO, IT DESERVES SOMEONE STRONG... SOMEONE WHO'LL FIGHT FOR WHAT'S RIGHT...
YOU KNOW... IN SOME RESPECTS... ONE COULD SAY EVEN I'VE FAILED TO LIVE UP TO IT.
FIGHTING CRIME WAS MY LIFE BLOOD... HELPING THE PEOPLE WHO NEEDED ME... CRACKING A FEW HOODLUMS' HEADS ALONG THE WAY... THAT'S WHAT I LIVED FOR.
AND YET... I GAVE IT ALL UP FOR YOUNG MISS HELEN DOYLE. Oh, SHE MEANT WELL, BUT SHE INSISTED I RETIRE.
THE LAST TIME I FOUGHT CRIME... WAS THE DAY BEFORE OUR WEDDING.
I'M NOT SAYING I WASN'T A GOOD HUSBAND... IT'S JUST THAT... SINCE SHE PASSED AWAY... I'VE BEEN HAVING... REGRETS.
...WONDERING ABOUT HOW THINGS... COULD'VE BEEN.
ACTUALLY, WHEN I LOOK BACK ON IT, I CAN SEE SHE NEVER UNDERSTOOD ME. THERE HAS BEEN NO ONE WHO REALLY UNDERSTOOD ME.
WELL... NO... LET ME TAKE THAT BACK.
THERE WAS ONE PERSON...


C'MON, DAD. AREN'T YOU FINISHED YET? WE'VE GOT TO GET GOING.
THERE ARE SOME "PLACES" WE'D LIKE TO CHECK OUT FOR YOU BEFORE DINNER.
A BANANA... CARE FOR A BANANA?
I KNOW A NICE PLACE WHERE YOU COULD STI...
WHY, LOOK! HE HASN'T WRITTEN DOWN ANYTHING AT ALL!!
I TOLD YOU THERE WASN'T MUCH TO DAD'S STORY.
SHUT UP
DAD, YOU'LL NEVER GET THE MONEY YOU PROMISED US.
I SAID, SHUT UP!!
I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU TWO AND I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOU.
SURE... IT'S OBVIOUS YOU WANT HIS MONEY... BUT IT'S MORE THAN THAT... MUCH MORE.
YOU'RE DISAPPOINTED... BOTH OF YOU... BECAUSE YOUR OLD MAN ISN'T WHAT YOU WANT HIM TO BE.
YOU FEEL HE'S NOT THE HERO YOU'VE READ ABOUT. YOU WOULD'VE LOVED TO HAVE GROWN UP BASKING IN THE GLORY OF HAVING YOUR DAD FIGHT CRIME.
BUT SEEING HIM TAKE OUT THE TRASH, WORK A DUMB OL' NINE-TO-FIVER... THAT WASN'T YOUR CUP OF TEA. WELL, LET ME TELL YOU ONE THING...
THAT MAN OVER THERE... THAT...
THAT... WONDERFUL MAN... IS MUCH MORE A HERO THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW.
YOU DIDN'T FAIL Mr. WINCHESTER.
WHEN YOU GAVE UP CRIME FIGHTING TO RAISE YOUR FAMILY, YOU PROVED YOURSELF MORE WORTHY... THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT YOU DID.
IT TAKES MORE FROM A MAN TO HOLD DOWN A JOB, WORK DAY IN AND DAY OUT, AND RAISE KIDS THAN IT TAKES TO BE A SUPERHERO FOR A COUPLE OF GLORIOUS MOMENTS. A LOT MORE.


IN FACT...
McALLISTER! PUFF PUFF
THE ARCHITECTURAL TERRORISTS--PUFF THEY'RE HERE!! PUFF PUFF
T-THEY'VE GOT GUNS!!
THEY'VE BEEN BLOWING UP BUILDINGS ALL OVER THE CITY! BUT WHY US?
THEY'VE GOT TO BE STOPPED.
THE POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY.
NO! SOMETHING'S GOT TO BE DONE NOW!!
DON'T DO IT, Mr. WINCHESTER! PLEASE... WHATEVER YOU'RE THINKING.. DON'T DO IT!
HE DIDN'T HEAR ME. I COULD TELL BY HIS EYES HE WAS ALREADY DETERMINED TO GO OUT. THE ONLY THING I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WAS WHY.

HE WAS OFF AND RUNNING. EXCEPT THIS TIME IT WASN'T AN AGE OLD DREAM...
THIS TIME IT WAS HARD... COLD... REALITY.
BARN!!! WE WERE DRIVING BY AND SAW ALL THE COMMOTION! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!
SEE FOR YOURSELF.
HEY! ISN'T THAT THE PHANTOM MAN?!?
YEP.
THE POOR GUY IS GETTING BEATEN TO A PULP! WHAT A STORY! I'VE GOT TO GET SOME PICTURES!
DREKSTON...
MAYBE YOU CAN STOP ME, McALLISTER... BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THEM?!?
Oh, NO!!
YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... WE'RE HERE WITH YOU LIVE, BRINGING THE STARTLING EVENTS AS THEY HAPPEN!!! THE ARCHITECTURAL TERRORISTS HAVE SET UP A SMOKE SCREEN...
...RIGHT HERE IN THE DAILY HORN LOBBY! THE POLICE ARE GROUPING OUTSIDE, PUTTING ON THEIR GAS MASKS BEFORE... WAIT! A NEW DEVELOPMENT HAS JUST UNFOLDED!
LENNY WINCHESTER, THE ACE WONDER FROM THE 1940s, ONCE KNOWN AS THE PHANTOM MAN, HAS JUST COME OUT OF RETIREMENT! HE'S ENTERED THE LOBBY TO STOP THE TERRORISTS...
HOWEVER, AT THIS MOMENT THE TERRORISTS HAVE TAKEN THE UPPER HAND. MR. WINCHESTER IS ALREADY ON THE GROUND... IN PAIN!!
6

I'M GOING IN THERE!
NO, DICK! WAIT! THE POLICE ARE GONNA USE TEAR GAS!
DICK PLOWED INTO THE BATTLE WHICH THE PHANTOM MAN HAD STARTED, BUT AS THE CROWD MADE WAY FOR HIM, I SAW LENNY WINCHESTER GO DOWN. IT LOOKED BAD. REAL BAD... AND THEN THE COPS THREW THEIR GAS CANISTERS AND WE COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING MORE.
THERE WERE SOME WHO REVELED IN THE MELEE...
YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... WE'RE BRINGING IT TO YOU LIVE FROM THE DAILY HORN BUILDING!
SOME WHO SIMPLY TOOK IN THE EXPERIENCE...
INCREDIBLE.
AND OTHERS WHO SAW SOMETHING... UGLY FOR THE FIRST TIME.
DAD'S GETTING HURT!
I GUESS THAT'S WHY MOM WANTED HIM TO RETIRE.
THE MASKED MAN WAS TAKING AN EVEN WORSE BEATING, BUT THEN... I GUESS I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD SEE THAT.
IT'S HARD TO SEE THROUGH ALL THE SMOKE... BUT I BELIEVE THE MASKED MAN HAS NOW REACHED THE SIDE OF PHANTOM MAN!!
I CAN'T TELL FOR SURE, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S PICKING HIM UP!!
CAN YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING?
I THINK THE MASKED MAN IS BRINGING DAD OUT!
C'MON MASKED MAN!!
HOW COULD DAD DO SOMETHING SO STUPID?!? WHEN THIS IS OVER, I'LL...
I'LL...
Oh, my...

KOFF KOFF H-HE SAVED ME, BARN.
WHAT A SPECTACULAR FEAT, PHANTOM MAN!
GREATEST COME-BACK OF THE CENTURY!
PUFF PUFF PUFF
YOU WERE JUST GREAT!!
MAY WE ASK YOU A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS?
PUFF PUFF PLEASE...IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME... I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT...
PUFF PUFF Mr. McALLISTER, I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE.
ME?
YES. TALKING WITH YOU... LISTENING TO THE THINGS YOU SAID...
IT MADE ME SEE... WHAT BEING JUST YOURSELF REALLY MEANS.
TAKE CARE.
BY GOLLY, BARN, THAT GUY REALLY LIKES YOU.
BARN?
FIN

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ECLIPSE MONTHLY:
STEEL, STEALTH AND MAGIC

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(and Barney)
by B.C. BOYER
in every issue of
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